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FUNCTIONAL ORIENTATION OF WISCONSIN FARM WOMEN TOWARDS MASS MEDIA.

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THE STUDY WAS SET UP IN 1963 CHIEFLY TO IDENTIFY THE FUNCTIONS OF VARIOUS MASS MEDIA AND THEIR RELATIVE IMPORTANCE TO THE AUDIENCE (A SAMPLE OF WISCONSIN FARM WOMEN). THE FARM WOMEN WERE IN CONTACT WITH MASS MEDIA AN AVERAGE OF SIX OR SEVEN HOURS DAILY. BASED ON EARLIER DATA (1957) IT APPEARED THAT THE PROPORTION OF HOMES WITH TELEVISION, WOMEN'S MAGAZINES, AND GENERAL MAGAZINES HAD RISEN, WHILE THE PROPORTION TAKING WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS HAD DECREASED. TOTAL RESPONSES TO DIRECT QUESTIONS STRESSED INFORMATION AS THE FUNCTION OF MASS MEDIA, FOLLOWED BY ENTERTAINMENT, SOCIAL CONTACT, AND COMPANIONSHIP. HOWEVER, RESPONSES TO PROJECTION QUESTIONS STRESSED ENTERTAINMENT SLIGHTLY MORE THAN INFORMATION. PRESTIGE RATINGS FAVORED FARM MAGAZINES AND NEWS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS BROADCASTING. FARM AND WOMEN'S MAGAZINES RANKED HIGHEST, AND TELEVISION AND WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS LOWEST, AS INFORMATION SOURCES. TELEVISION WAS MOST OFTEN SPECIFIED, AND FARM MAGAZINES AND WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS LEAST OFTEN SPECIFIED, FOR ENTERTAINMENT. NEWSPAPERS LED IN TERMS OF SOCIAL CONTACT. RADIO (WITH ONLY 11 PERCENT OF THE SAMPLE) WAS THE LEADING MEDIUM FOR COMPANIONSHIP. FINDINGS SUGGEST THAT THESE FARM WOMEN RELY HEAVILY ON MASS MEDIA BUT THAT THE MEDIA ARE USED IN AN INTERLOCKING FASHION WITH NO ONE MEDIUM SERVING A GIVEN PURPOSE EXCLUSIVELY. THE DOCUMENT INCLUDES 29 REFERENCES. (LY)

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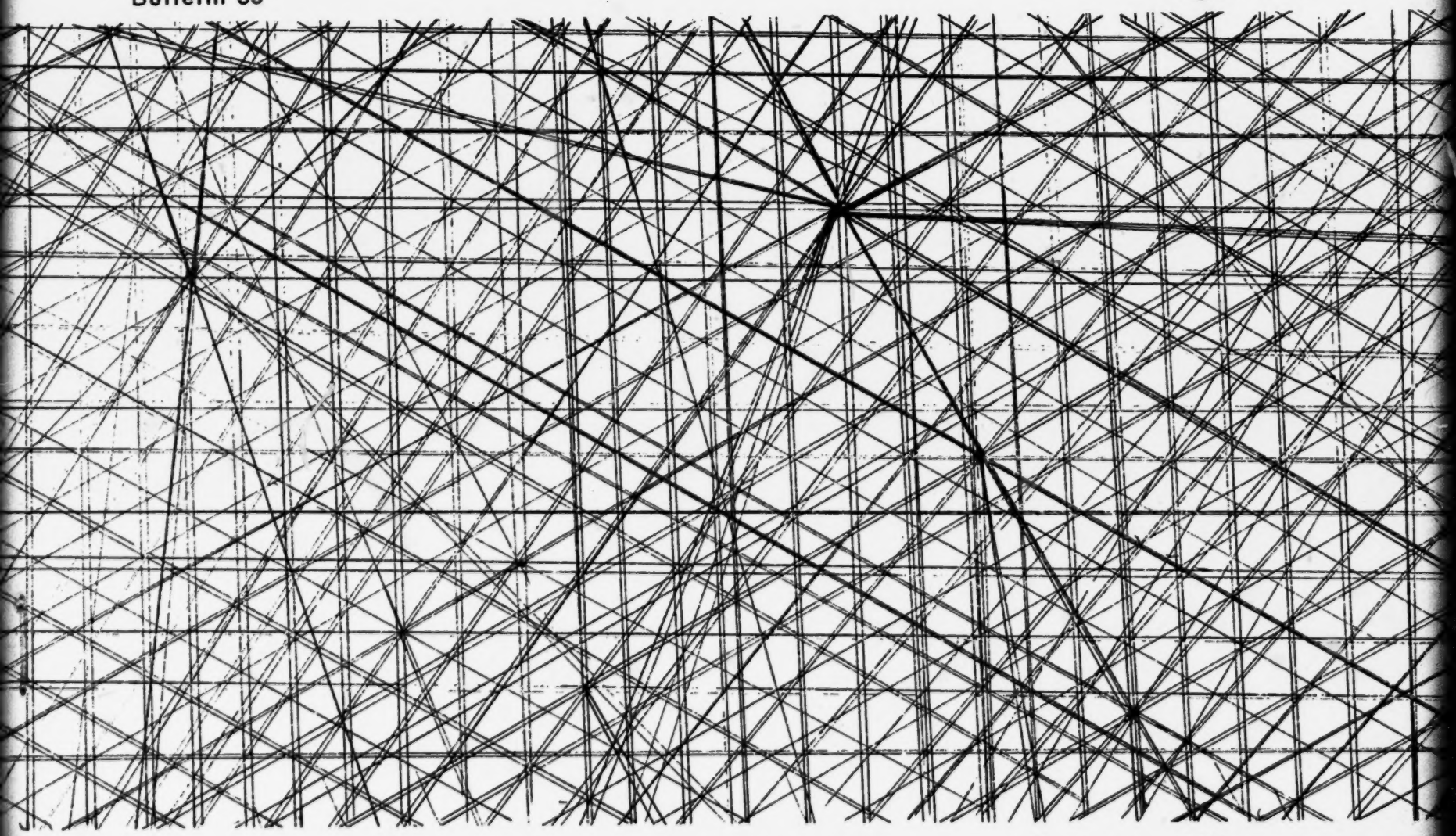

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A Survey of Wisconsin Farm Women to Determine Their Functional Orientation Toward Mass Media

Report #1 -- Frequency Data

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August, 1965

Introduction

This is the first report on a study of the behavior of 540 Wisconsin farm women with mass media in relation to the functions that these women expect the media to perform for them.

The study is concerned with the reasons why farm women read, view, and listen to the media they choose. In addition to identifying the functions of the mass media and determining their relative importance, the study is concerned with determining whether particular types of individuals set their media exposure habits according to their perception of media functions.

The current report includes frequency distributions and interpretations of the frequency distributions and is primarily concerned with function identification. A later report will include a comparative analysis of variables and the analysis of individual types.

The field survey was conducted in the spring of 1963 through the facilities of the University of Wisconsin Survey Research Laboratory.

The 1963 survey grew out of a project conducted by the authors in 1957 on time use patterns of farm families with mass media. Results of this earlier study are reported in two publications.[1]

In some cases in this report data from the 1963 study are compared with those from 1957.

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[1] "Time Use Patterns and Communications Activities of Wisconsin Farm Families in Wintertime," Ross and Bostian, Bulletin 28, Department of Agricultural Journalism, University of Wisconsin, March 1958; and "Mass Media and the Wisconsin Farm Family," Bostian and Ross, Research Bulletin 234, University of Wisconsin Experiment Station, January 1962.

Background

The mass media obviously perform certain basic functions for people, otherwise people would not spend as much time as they do with the media. (The study of communications activities of Wisconsin farm families conducted in 1957 showed that women on an average weekday spent 2.75 hours viewing television; 2.05 hours listening to radio; and .65 hours reading. Men on weekdays spent 1.65 hours viewing television; 1.45 hours listening to radio; and .67 hours reading. Thus, women spent nearly one third and men nearly one fourth of their waking hours in contact with mass media.)

The functions of mass media as seen through the eyes of the communicator are generally similar to the functions of mass media as seen through the eyes of the audience. At least it is the goal of the communicator to fill the needs and wishes of his audience. He can and does add content that he thinks the audience needs, without a clear demand from the audience for its inclusion. He may, on the other hand, fail to fulfill certain functions desired by the audience.

In "Responsibility in Mass Communications" Wilbur Schramm says, "Mass communications contributes to functioning of our social order. . .with the watchman function of reporting dangers and opportunities on the horizon; the council function of presenting alternative arguments and alternative candidates; the teacher function of passing the funded culture of the society on to the new members of the society; the entertainer function of making us laugh and marvel and relax; and the business function of speeding and extending our commerce." [2]

Schramm approaches function from the viewpoint of the responsibility of the mass media to society. Others have pointed out that the mass media are the principle source of continuing adult education for the citizens of a modern democracy. They provide--if it is to be provided at all--the educational information that must reach all groups and areas, and the voice that must be given to a wide range of opinions.

Theodore Peterson in his book "Magazines in the Twentieth Century" talks about the functions magazines performed from 1900 to 1950. He says the magazines were responsible in some measure for social and political reform; they interpreted issues and events and put them in national perspective; they fostered a sense of national community; they provide millions with low-cost entertainment; they were an inexpensive instructor in daily living; and they were an educator in man's cultural heritage. [3]

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2 Responsibility in Mass Communication, Wilbur Schramm, 1957, Harper & Brothers, pp. 51-52

3 Magazines in the Twentieth Century, Theodore Peterson, 1956, University of Illinois Press, pp. 393-395

R. O. Nafziger, director of the University of Wisconsin School of Journalism defining the functions of the mass media, says first, the media satisfy a curiosity as to what's going on. Second, the media provide entertainment. Third, and to a lesser extent, the media provide a source of information for individual self improvement.

Others have specified that people read (a newspaper) for information about public affairs; as a tool for daily living; for respite; for social prestige; for social contact; and as a habit.

This Study

In this study function is divided into five major categories:

(1) Information
(2) Entertainment and Relaxation
(3) Social Prestige
(4) Companionship
(5) Social Contact

Information is further divided into two sub-categories

(a) Enlightenment on current affairs and the cultural heritage.
(b) Information that leads to improved individual standards of living or income and business gain.

It can be expected that the usefulness a mass medium has for an audience will be determined by the extent that the medium fulfills the functions the audience expects it to fulfill. In other words an audience will evaluate a medium by measuring it against the functions the audience expects performed.

Farm women fill a rather unique position among women in their functional relationship with the media. Farm and city women probably agree on the functions of entertainment and general enlightenment performed by the mass media. For that matter, except for certain obvious differences in interest, the patterns for entertainment and enlightenment are probably not too different between men and women.

It is in the function of information for business gain that the farm woman differs from the majority of city women. The farm woman is definitely involved in the business operation of the farm. Eugene Wilkening, rural sociologist at the University of Wisconsin, found that approximately 60 per cent of the women participated in decisions on renting or buying land; 40 per cent on remodeling farm buildings; 40 per cent on using more fertilizer; 40 per cent on buying new machinery; and 25 per cent on culling and buying livestock.[4]

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4 Wisconsin Farm Women's Participation in Farm Decisions, Eugene Wilkening, Unpublished Data, University of Wisconsin, Department of Rural Sociology, 1963

It should be noted at this point that many of the media or segments of media directed to farm audiences put relatively more emphasis on information that leads to improved standard of living and business gain as contrasted with, for example, a metropolitan daily newspaper that puts relatively more emphasis on information for enlightenment.

In the past the media concerned with farm audiences, particularly the farm magazines, have developed a "farm family" pattern. They have (1) included material of interest to women (ie., homemaking), (2) have hoped to draw interest of women to farm copy, and (3) have included community interest material.

The question now arises whether this "horizontal" approach to the farm family will continue to have a place with the farm magazine and other agriculturally oriented media, or whether this should be replaced with a formula that appeals more exclusively to the manager of a commercial farm operation. The broadcast media and newspapers are confronted with proportionate declines in farm audiences and are confronted with problems of adding functions other than agricultural copy. (ie., entertainment, general interest, etc.)

Sample Techniques and Sampling Results

This survey used a multi-stage, area-probability sample of housing units in rural unincorporated areas throughout the state of Wisconsin. Twenty-eight counties served as primary sampling units for the study. Eligible respondents were adult females (21 years of age or older) who resided in housing units on active farms.

A total of 882 addresses were selected for the sample. Of these, 594, or 67 per cent yielded eligible respondents (Table No. 1). The high proportion of addresses which did not meet the eligibility criteria was due primarily to the difficulty of determining whether or not an address was located on an active farm. If there was any doubt as to the farming status of an address, it was listed and its exact classification determined at the time of interviewing. Twenty per cent of the original sample, and slightly more than three-fifths of the addresses classified as "non-sample" were located on inactive farms.

Farm households in which there were no women 21 years of age or older accounted for 7 per cent of the original sample and one-fifth of the ineligible addresses. The remainder of addresses which were deleted from the sample were vacant housing units. Six per cent of the total sample and slightly less than one-fifth of the non-sample category were unoccupied dwellings.

Completed interviews were obtained at 540 of the 594 eligible addresses, for an over-all response rate of 91 per cent (Table No. 2). Refusals, which accounted for more than half of the total non-response, were received at five per cent of the eligible addresses. The remainder of the non-response was divided evenly among eligible respondents who could not be contacted

even after four calls by an interviewer (2 per cent of the total eligible sample), and women who were unable to participate in the survey because of illness, senility, or language difficulty (2 per cent).

Table No. 1
Results of All Addresses Listed*

Eligible Respondents	67%	
Non-Sample:	33%	
House vacant		6%
No adult women		7%
Not an active farm		20%
TOTAL	100%	
No. of addresses	882	

*Included in the total were 31 addresses which were weighted (16 weighted triple and 15 weighted double = 47 weights) because the low number of farms in the area made it inordinately expensive to take the required number of interviews. These addresses were located in Adams, Douglas, and Price counties.

Table No. 2
Results of Housing Units with Eligible Respondents*

Completed Interviews	91%	
Non-Responses:	9%	
Refusals		5%
Not at Home		2%
Unable to Participate		2%
TOTAL	100%	
No. of Eligible Respondents	594	

*Includes 16 weighted interviews (10 double weighted and 6 triple weighted = 22 weights). None of the non-responses were weighted. The weighted interviews were in Adams, Douglas, and Price counties.

In the 1957 study Wisconsin counties were stratified according to degree of urbanization. Six counties were selected (two high urban; two medium urban; and two low urban). Communities were arbitrarily selected within these counties. Every nth dwelling on rural routes from these communities were then selected as sample units.

Characteristics of the Sample

Table No. 3 summarizes the demographic characteristics of the sample. The figures are arithmetic averages with the exceptions of marital status, organization participation and off-farm work, which are percentages. A discussion of the range within these averages follows.

Table No. 3
Characteristics of the Sample

Years on Farm		34
Years Education		10
Age		45
Marital Status		92% married
Farm Acreage		169 acres
Total Gross Income		$7,700
Household Size		4.3
Children Under 21		2.1
Home Facilities (Level of Living)		9.2
Organization Participation (One or more)		69%
Off-Farm Work	Some	100+ days
Husbands	39%	19%
Wives	24%	14%

Years on the Farm. The average number of years farm women had lived on farms was 34.5. More than one in 12 (7.4%) had lived on farms 10 years or less. More than one in four (27.5%) had lived on farms between 11 and 30 years. About two in five (41.2%) had lived on farms 31 to 50 years. And two in five (22.7%) had lived on farms 51 years or longer.

Years Education. Of the sample, 7.8% had less than eight grades; 32.7% had completed eight grades and 59.5% had completed more than eight grades. Of the latter group 12.3% completed 9 to 11 grades; 29.2% were high school graduates; and 17.6% had at least some college.

Age. About one-fourth (23.2%) of the farm women were under 35. More than half (52.2%) were 35 to 54 years and almost one-fourth (24.6%) were 55 or older.

Marital Status. More than nine in ten (91.6%) of the sample were married. Fewer than one in 50 (.4%) were divorced. About 6% were widowed and 1.9% were single.

Farm Acreage. Farm cropland for the sample ranged from 29 acres or less to 500 acres and up. More than one-fourth (27.1%) lived on farms under 100 acres. More than one-third (36.6%) were on farms 100 to 179 acres. And 33.8% lived on farms 180 acres or larger. The average size of farms (169 acres) was 49 acres larger than in the 1957 study.

Total Gross Income. About one in four (26.5%) had incomes before deduction of any expenses or taxes of under $5,000. More than two in five (40.1%) had incomes of $5,000 to $9,999. One in four (25.1%) had incomes of $10,000 or higher, while 9.5% had incomes of $15,000 or more.

Household Size. Household size includes persons actually living in the farm home. About half (49.9%) of the families in the study had three to five members. Almost one in four (24.2%) had two or less members.

Children Under 21. Number of children here includes those living in the farm homes. It does not include children who may have left the farms. One third of the families had no children under 21 in their homes; 27.0% had one or two children; 27.3%, three or four children. Of those families with children the mean was 3.1.

Home facilities (Level of Living). The level of living index developed by rural sociologists at the University of Wisconsin included the following home facilities: freezer, telephone, central heat piped into rooms, tile or inlaid linoleum on kitchen floor, 1957 or later model car, steam iron, closets in all bedrooms in house, FM radio, electric coffee maker, electric frying pan, automatic washer, automatic dryer, automatic dishwasher, long-playing record phonograph, gas or electric water heater, flush tiolet. The index was used to determine level of living scores in this study.

The median group in this sample had 10 to 11 such facilities. The mean for the farm women was 9.2. About one-fourth (24.6%) had zero to seven facilities; 51.8% had eight to 11; and 23.5% had 12 or more.

Organization Participation. About seven in 10 (69%) participated in one or more organizations. About three in eight (37%) took part in one to three organizations. 21% in four to six and 10% in seven or more. One per cent participated in 14 organizations and 31% in none.

Off-Farm Work. Over half (52.7%) of the farm women's husbands did not work off their farms. About one in five (20.2%) did little off-farm work; 18.7% worked 100 days or more off the farm. (8% = no answer; women answering for men). More than three in four (75.7%) of the farm women did not work off their farms. More than one in 10 worked little time off the farm (up to 99 days). And 13.6% were employed off the farm 100 days or more. (In the 1957 study 55% of the farmers did no off-farm work; 23% worked 99 days or less off the farm; 22% worked 100 days or more off the farm).

Media Available in Homes

The following table compares percentage of farm homes in Wisconsin with mass media in the 1957 and 1963 studies:

Table No. 4
Media Available in Farm Homes 1957 & 1963
(per cent)

	1957	1963
Daily Newspaper	74	78
Sunday Newspaper	--	47
Weekly Newspaper	76	61
Farm Magazine	96	95
Women's Magazine	21*	48
Other Magazines	30*	75
Television	86	94
Radio	96	98.5

*In 1957 the question on these two media was "do you read regularly" not are they in the home.

Although sampling techniques are different in the two studies, it is reasonable to expect that the proportion of farm homes with weekly newspapers declined during this period, and the proportion of farm homes with women's magazines, other magazines, and television increased. It is also apparent that most farm homes have radio, television and at least one farm magazine.

The next table shows the number of media available in farm homes in the 1963 study.

Table No. 5
No. of Media Available in Farm Homes 1963
(per cent)

MEDIA	Number in Home						Average/home
	0	1	2	3	4	5+	
Dailies	22	70	7	1	--	--	.8
Sunday News	53	43	3	.4	--	--	.5
Weekly News	39	51	9	.9	--	--	.6
Farm Mags	5	10	21	22	19	22	3.3
Women's Mags	52	21	15	7	3	1	.9
Other Mags	25	28	20	13	7	7	1.8
Television	6	94	--	--	--	--	.9
Radio	1.5	22	28	26	12	11	2.7

The table shows that magazines and radio tend to be available in farm homes in multiple numbers. Note that just over half the homes do not have women's magazines. Television and dailies are available in most homes but not in multiple numbers.

Two items of media availability were asked that are not included in this table. In the 1963 study about one home in three (32.5%) had long-playing phonographs. Less than one per cent of farm homes had long-playing phonographs in 1957. More than three farm homes in ten (32.9%) had FM radio sets in 1963.

Because of rapid changes in television set ownership the 1963 respondents were asked the year they first started watching TV. Following is the breakdown:

Table No. 6
Year Started Watching TV
(per cent)

		accumulative
1952 or earlier	22	22
1953	13	35
1954	12	47
1955	15	62
1956	8	70
1957	10	80
1958	8	88
1959	2	90
1960	2	92
1961	1	93
1962	1	94

Media Exposure

Following is a summary table of media exposure in the 1963 study compared to the 1957 study. (The 1957 study was a diary study. Respondents filled in all of their time activity uses over a three-day period. In the 1963 study respondents indicated how much time they spent in media activities "yesterday" and "usually". A reliability test conducted in the 1957 study indicated that the grosser measurement used in 1963 would be sufficient for a check on this variable. The table also presents figures under columns headed S and P. The S column is an average for all respondents in the sample, whether or not they actually did participate in this activity. The P column is an average of those who indicated that they did participate in a given activity. Also note that daily newspapers, television, and radio are computed on a daily basis; Sunday and weekly papers on a weekly basis; and magazines on a monthly basis. Figures are not available on a weekly and monthly basis from the 1957 study.)

Table No. 7
Time Spent with Media
Average for Sample and Participants
(in minutes and hours)

	1963				1957	
	Yesterday		Usual			
	S	P	S	P	S	P
Per Day						
Daily Newspapers (1963n=418)	28"	41"	33"	43"	26"	--
Television (1963n=504)	2.6'	3.2'	2.1'	2.9'	2.5'	3.2'
Radio (1963n=527)	2.5'	3.1'	3.2'	3.5'	1.8'	2.9'
Per Week						
Sunday Newspapers (1963 n=251)	--	--	35"	1.2'	--	--
Weekly Newspapers (1963n=324)	--	--	33"	55"	--	--
Per Month						
All Farm Magazines (1963 n=496)	--	--	2.7'	3.0'	--	--
All Women's Magazines (1963 n=254)	--	--	1.6'	3.3'	--	--
All Other Magazines (1963 n=391)	--	--	3.2'	4.4'	--	--

First, comparing the 1963 data for "yesterday" and "usual" it appears that the respondents tended to estimate more newspaper reading time than they said they did yesterday. The same is true of radio. They tended to estimate less television viewing than they said they did yesterday. The "yesterday" figures are probably more accurate although there is not much difference. The time exposure is quite similar to 1957 for dailies, television, and radio.

In the 1963 figures on exposure to Sunday, and weekly newspapers and to magazines the differences between sample and participator figures are related to the proportion of the total sample taking part in this activity. For example, most of the total sample saw farm magazines and the difference between sample and participator figures is not great.

Table No. 8 shows percentages of respondents in various time categories for the media. Across the top of the table are listed the time categories from zero time to eight hours or more. Under this are the letters Y and U which stand for behavior "yesterday" and as the people said they "usually do." Down the side are the media. The table shows, for example that 10% of the people with dailies did not read a daily newspaper yesterday, while 1% said they usually do not read a daily newspaper. The use of a dash(-) indicates that data were not asked in this category. For example, respondents were not asked whether they read a Sunday paper yesterday.

The use of a capital X indicates that categories were condensed over this particular time span. For example, for television respondents were asked if they did not watch television, but the next time breakdown was 59" or less. In another example, for daily newspapers respondents were placed in the 2'-2'59" category if they said they read more than 2' a day, although some may have read more than 2'59". (See page 12 for Table No. 8)

In Table No. 8 the following are interesting sets of figures:

1. In the column of non-participators some 10% of daily newspaper subscribers and some 17% of radio set owners said they did not participate "yesterday." The figures for "usual" participation were much lower. For Television 14% did not watch "yesterday," but a somewhat startling 23% said they "usually" do not watch. Of the other media, small proportions of subscribers are non-participators.

2. Most of the participators in newspaper reading are accounted for in less than 2 hours daily. But time exposure for broadcast media on a daily basis and for magazines on a monthly basis climbs into multiple hour exposure. Some 68% of subscribers spent less than one hour per day on dailies under "yesterday" behavior. The corresponding accumulated percentage for television is 24% and for radio 32%. Some 15% of television set owners watch five hours or more per day and some 26% of radio owners listened five hours or more per day. Heavy radio listeners probably tend to leave the set on throughout the day, and move into and out of earshot. The 1957 diary study indicates that television viewers, even heavy viewers, tend to stick close by the set while they are viewing.

The 1957 study showed radio listening almost exclusively a daytime activity and television viewing predominantly an evening activity. In the 1963 study respondents indicated amount of time in radio and television before 6 p.m. and after 6 p.m. Percentages of respondents according to amount of time in daytime and evening listening and viewing are shown in Table No. 9.

Table No. 9
Radio and Television Participation Before and After 6 p.m.
(per cent according to amount of time)
(percentages rounded)

	Daytime Radio	Daytime Television	Evening Radio	Evening Television
None	18	45 median	81 median	22
Less than 1'	16	15	6	11
1'-1'59"	19 median	18	8	21 median
2'-2'59"	12	12	3	21
3'-3'59"	10	6	1	14
4'-4'59"	8	2	--	8
5'-5'59"	4	1	--	1
6'-6'59"	3	1	2	1
7'-7'59"	2	1	--	1
8' up	8	--	--	--

Table No. 8

Time Exposure to Mass Media-1963

(per cent of participants)

	0		1-14"		15-29'		30-59"		1'-1'59"		2'-2'59"		3'-3'59"		4'-4'59'		5'-5'59"		6'-6'59"		7'-7'59"		8'+	
	Y*	U*	Y	U	Y	U	Y	U	Y	U	Y	U	Y	U	Y	U	Y	U	Y	U	Y	U	Y	U
Per Day																								
Dailies (n=418)	10	1	10	11	22	29	26	41	11	17	1	1	X		X		X		X		X		X	
Television (n=504)	14	23	X		X		10	14	17	13	18	16	15	9	11	10	7	8	3	2	2	2	3	1
Radio (n=527)	17	7	X		X		15	16	18	19	12	14	12	13	6	7	6	6	3	5	2	3	9	11
Per Week																								
Sunday News (n=251)	--	1	--	6	--	11	--	30	--	38	--	12	--	3	X		X		X		X		X	
Weekly News (n=324)	--	1	--	8	--	25	--	36	--	22	--	6	--	2	XX		X		X		X		X	
Per Month																								
Farm Mags (n=506)	--	2	X		X		--	17	--	22	--	21	--	9	--	8	--	4	--	3	--	2	--	6
Women's Mags (n=255)	--	1	X		X		--	16	--	23	--	18	--	12	--	9	--	5	--	5	--	4	--	9
Other Mags (n=400)	--	2	X		X		--	11	--	15	--	13	--	9	--	11	--	7	--	6	--	6	--	21

(*Y = yesterday; *U = usual)

Table No. 10 presents data on total magazine behavior.

Table No. 10
Total Magazine Bahavior

Minutes Yesterday Reading Magazines	Sample = 28"	Participators = 67"
Average No. Magazines per home (n=526)	5.9	
Average Time per Month with all Magazines	8.08 hours	
Per cent of Total Magazines Time by Categories:		
Other Magazines	41%	
Farm Magazines	34%	
Women's Magazines	20%	

Table No. 11 presents data on 10 selected farm magazines (similar data were not coded for other media).

Table No. 11
Data on Ten Selected Farm Magazines
(Corrected To Time Per Month)

	% Homes Receiving	Average Time per month				% Non-Readers
		Subscribers		Participators		
		No.	Time	No.	Time	
Wisconsin Agriculturist	72	364	82"	346	72"	5
Farm Journal	66	351	60"	338	66"	4
Successful Farming	48	242	55"	233	57"	4
Hoards Dairyman	33	167	60"	144	70"	14
Prairie Farmer	29	145	76"	140	79"	3
Wisconsin REA News	15	75	26"	71	28"	5
Electricity on the Farm	12	59	19"	50	22"	15
Pure Milk News	7	37	14"	27	20"	27
Wisconsin Farmers Union News	6	32	18"	23	25"	28
Farm Quarterly	3	17	5"	10	9"	41

It should be pointed out again at this point that we are dealing with women readers. The percentages of non-readers on some magazines is therefore not surprising. The table does point out that many women and in most cases the majority of women do spend time in these magazines. The larger circulation magazines, draw more time from each subscriber. It should also be noted that these figures are corrected to time per month. For per issue exposure, Wisconsin Agriculturist, Hoards Dairyman, Prairie Farmer and Wisconsin Farmers Union News (semi-monthly) should be divided by 2; and Farm Quarterly (quarterly) multiplied by 3.

Functional Orientation

The functional orientation of Wisconsin farm women to the media was measured in several types of questions. First, respondents were asked, in open end questions, "We'd like to know, in general, what you get out of (specific medium--for example, daily newspaper)--that is, what does the daily newspaper do for you or mean to you?" Second, respondents were shown situational drawings of women participating in four media situations (television viewing, magazine reading, radio listening, and newspaper reading). Respondents were asked a set of three probe questions about what the woman in the drawing was getting out of the situation and what specific content she would be oriented toward. Answers to the two batteries were coded with the same system. Categories included entertainment, information, prestige, companionship and social contact. Function was also measured in a semantic differential scale and indirectly in content directed questions.

Open-End Question:

Table No. 12 gives a breakdown under the major function categories for each of the media tested in the first battery (open-end) of function questions.

Table No. 12
Major Functions of the Media--Open-End Question
(per cent based on availability in the Home)

Media	Entertainment	Information	Prestige	Companionship	Social Contact
Dailies (n=418)	11	57	--	3	33
Sunday Newsp. (n=251)	27	70	--	--	9
Weekly Newsp. (n=354)	3	41	--	3	73
Farm Magazines (n=506)	6	95	--	--	1
Women's Mags. (n=255)	25	88	--	1	2
Other Mags. (n=400)	21	64	--	2	2
Television (n=503)	82	38	--	5	--
Radio (n=527)	35	65	--	11	7

Information appears to be the strongest function.

In terms of the entertainment function, television drew the most recognition with farm magazines and weekly newspapers least. It's also interesting to note that only a little more than one third specified radio as having an entertainment function. Women's and general magazines do perform an entertainment function for some of the women as do Sunday newspapers and to a lesser extent daily newspapers.

The information function comes through stronger than the entertainment function for all media except television. Relatively, farm magazines and women's magazines are specified by the highest proportion of these women as performing an information function and television by the lowest proportion. In this set of questions it appears the women perceived and expressed the "how-to-do" function more often than the "current news" function. This idea will be explored further later in this publication.

The prestige function was not perceived by the women. This does not say it does not exist, but it did not appear in this voluntary open-end question situation. The companionship function shows up only in scattered areas. Enough women specified the companionship function of radio to take note. Newspapers, particularly weeklies, do apparently perform a social contact function.

Projection Question:

The projection question was tested on four media--newspapers, magazines, radio, and television. Table No. 13 gives the functional orientation for this question.

Table No. 13
Major Functions of the Media--Projection Question
(per cent total women)

Media	Entertainment	Information	Prestige	Companionship	Social Contact
Newspapers	31	71	1	--	25
Magazines	60	17	--	32	--
Radio	63	62	--	2	5
Television	86	25	--	1	--

The functional profile delineated in the projection question tends to reinforce the profile in the open-end question. Entertainment, in general, appears to be stronger than information. In the projection question newspapers tend to be informationally oriented, but with currents of entertainment and social contact. Television tends to have a dominant entertainment function but with an information current. Radio emerges as the medium with both entertainment and information orientation. The profile on magazines is blurred somewhat in the projection question. The informational role of the magazine drops; the entertainment role increases; and a companionship role emerges.

The profile for magazines may be partially explained by one of the probe questions asked here. Women were asked, "What kind of a magazine would you expect here to be reading?" Table No. 14 gives replies.

Table No. 14
Projection of Magazine Types
(per cent)

Women's Magazines	63
Farm Magazine	12
Love & Romance	6
General	6
Movie	1
Comics	1
Detective	1
Literary	--
Scientific	--
Sports	--
No Response & Other	10

(It should be noted that the functional orientation on the open-end question was asked only if the respondent had that particular medium in the home; whereas, the projection functional orientation was asked for the entire sample. Most of the homes had the four media represented in the projection question.)

Content - Directed Questions:

Additional data were collected in the study which adds light on the functional orientation toward the media, particularly in the information category. The following 10 tables list the 1st and 2nd choices of particular media for 10 specific subject matter categories. Discussion following each one points out whether or not the data tend to support the functional orientation. Tables are also grouped according to the expected functional category.

Table No 15
1st and 2nd Choice of Media
(per cent--rounded)

Entertainment Function

FOR RELAXATION & ENTERTAINMENT

	Dailies	Sunday	Weekly	Farm Mag.	Women's Mag.	Other Mag.	TV	Radio	None
1st Choice	10	1	2	3	11	3	52	15	3
2nd Choice	19	2	5	5	22	8	17	17	4

Information Function--News Orientation

NATIONAL & WORLD NEWS

	Dailies	Sunday	Weekly	Farm Mag.	Women's Mag.	Other Mag.	TV	Radio	None
1st Choice	35	1	2	1	-	2	31	27	-
2nd Choice	23	6	4	1	1	3	30	32	1

LOCAL COMMUNITY EVENTS AND LOCAL PEOPLE
(may include social contact function)

	Dailies	Sunday	Weekly	Farm Mag.	Women's Mag.	Other Mag.	TV	Radio	None
1st Choice	27	-	41	-	-	1	1	28	1
2nd Choice	26	2	17	-	1	1	7	41	4

Information Function--Helpful or How-to-do

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

	Dailies	Sunday	Weekly	Farm Mag.	Women's Mag.	Other Mag.	TV	Radio	None
1st Choice	7	2	1	8	67	2	8	1	3
2nd Choice	16	13	3	17	10	9	17	3	7

FAMILY CONCERNS

	Dailies	Sunday	Weekly	Farm Mag.	Women's Mag.	Other Mag.	TV	Radio	None
1st Choice	10	1	1	11	39	16	4	2	10
2nd Choice	14	6	4	16	15	13	5	6	13

Table No. 15 (cont.)

HOMEMAKING

	Dailies	Sunday	Weekly	Farm Mag.	Women's Mag.	Other Mag.	TV	Radio	None
1st Choice	5	2	1	26	53	1	3	2	5
2nd Choice	13	4	1	29	15	11	8	8	7

PERSONAL INTERESTS

	Dailies	Sunday	Weekly	Farm Mag.	Women's Mag.	Other Mag.	TV	Radio	None
1st Choice	5	3	1	17	43	13	4	2	9
2nd Choice	11	5	2	23	17	16	7	4	10

FARMING

	Dailies	Sunday	Weekly	Farm Mag.	Women's Mag.	Other Mag.	TV	Radio	None
1st Choice	1	-	1	92	-	1	2	1	2
2nd Choice	19	1	6	3	1	5	19	32	10

Companionship Function

KEEP FROM BEING LONELY

	Dailies	Sunday	Weekly	Farm Mag.	Women's Mag.	Other Mag.	TV	Radio	None
1st Choice	8	1	1	2	7	4	45	28	3
2nd Choice	9	2	3	3	12	6	24	33	5

Prestige Function

TALK ABOUT WITH OTHERS

	Dailies	Sunday	Weekly	Farm Mag.	Women's Mag.	Other Mag.	TV	Radio	None
1st Choice	31	2	9	2	11	4	29	8	3
2nd Choice	25	4	8	6	10	6	21	16	2

The following statistics are interesting:

About 70 per cent of the sample ranked television either 1st or 2nd for relaxation and entertainment. Around 30 per cent ranked dailies, women's magazines and radio either 1st or 2nd for relaxation and entertainment. Only 4 per cent discounted the media and replied "none of these" for relaxation or entertainment.

Dailies, television and radio, in that order ranked as 1st choice for national and world news. But combining 1st and 2nd choices the order shifts to television, radio and dailies. The differences are not large enough so that one of the three stands above the others. However, both the broadcast media rate relatively strong on this category. On local community events and local people, television is not as strong. Radio appears to be the strongest in combined 1st and 2nd choices with weeklies and dailies also in the picture.

On matters of "helpful information" all the media play at least some part. Of those items peculiarly interesting to women, the women's magazines emerge strongly, more strongly than is indicated by the circulation of women's magazines in these homes. For example 48 per cent of the homes had at least one women's magazine, but 67 per cent rated these magazines 1st for information on personal appearance and 53 per cent 1st for homemaking. Some magazine exposure probably occurs outside the home. Farm magazines did have pulling power in the area of women's interests (and rated far above other media for interest in farming).

The broadcast media emerge as the predominant choice "to keep from being lonely." They, with dailies and to some extent women's magazines, rate high to "talk about with others."

The grouping of these subject matter interests under functional headings is arbitrary. An intercorrelational analysis might come up with a different grouping. But with the arbitrary grouping the subject matter questions seem generally to fit the pattern of the function questions with the following differences. Daily newspapers and television appear to fulfill a prestige function. Sunday newspapers do not rate as high as in the general function question as an entertainment medium. Some media perform the news-information function. Others perform the helpful information function. There is some overlap between the two classes of information in daily newspapers. Companionship and prestige show up more frequently as oriented toward specific subject matter interests.

Table No. 16 gives a weighted ranking (frequency times 1st and 2nd choice carried five places) of the media according to each subject matter category.

Table No. 16
Weighted Ranking of Media by Subject Matter

	Relaxation and Entertainment	Non-Local News	Local News	Personal Appearance	Family Concerns	Homemaking	Personal Interests	Farming	Keep From Being Lonely	Talk About With Others
Dailies	4	3	3	4	4	3	4	4	4	1
Sunday Newspaper	-	4	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Weekly Newspaper	-	5	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Farm Magazines	-	-	-	2	3	2	2	1	-	-
Women's Magazines	2	-	-	1	1	1	1	-	3	4
Other Magazines	5	-	4	3	2	4	3	5	5	-
Television	1	1	-	3	-	-	-	3	1	2
Radio	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	2	2	3

The table gives a "profile" of the media in the eyes of the women. Dailies as a choice in different subjects seem to have a place across the spectrum. Weeklies perform in the eyes of this audience almost exclusively in local news. Magazines and particularly farm magazines are identified with helpful information. Women's magazines rank 1st in four of these categories. Television and radio show up in relaxation, in news and in some of the more covert areas like companionship and prestige.

The women were also asked to rank their interests in the subject matter categories. (Note that the categories "keep from being lonely" and "talk about with others" are omitted from this ranking.)

Table No. 17
Mean Ranking of Subject Matter Interests

Family Concerns	2.0
Running Household	2.5
Personal Appearance	3.8
Farming	4.4
Local News	5.0
Personal Interests	5.5
Non-Local News	5.8
Relaxation & Entert.	5.9

It is possible that this ranking does not actually compare to media exposure and actual behavior in the pursuit of such interests. It is interesting to note that relaxation ranks last. Future analysis of the data will be concerned with this point.

Answers to the function questions were expressed in terms of general function orientation, but also in terms of specific content. Content responses were coded. The data will be presented in several forms.

Table No. 18 gives the percentage of respondents taking a given medium who mentioned interest in the particular content category at least once in an open-end answer. (See Table No. 18 on page 24.)

The data give some idea of the relative orientation toward the media in terms of content and orientation toward the content itself. The orientation toward the media tends to follow the patterns already laid down in the function questions, but reveals more detail. There are some exceptions. Radio, dailies and Sunday newspapers take a somewhat stronger position on news in relation to television. (Note that these are participators in the given media.) Farm magazines seem to play a larger role in providing homemaking information than with the direct content questions (84% mentioned this category.) Other kinds of content show up that are not revealed in other questions, ie., advertising, schools, music, etc. It is interesting that weekly papers rated highest among all media in mentions on advertising.

Table No. 19 re-arranges these data and presents the proportionate number of mentions for each content category (percentage of total mentions) for each of the media. (See Table No. 19 on page 25.)

Table No. 18
Content Orientation
(as per cent of those taking)

	Dailies	Sunday	Weekly	Farm Mag.	Wom. Mag.	Other Mag.	Radio	TV
News--General	48	36	5	1	--	15	68	29
Local News	52	10	90	1	--	2	24	1
Non-Local News	20	16	3	1	--	14	6	4
Farm Information	5	1	3	47	--	1	7	5
Weather	3	1	--	1	--	--	40	17
Homemaking	23	42	10	84	81	9	5	4
Gardening	--	1	--	5	12	2	--	1
Stories	--	1	--	3	29	14	1	20
Comics	8	14	1	4	--	3	1	1
Health	4	3	--	2	11	7	1	1
Advertisements	6	11	28	2	2	1	3	1
Travel	--	2	--	--	--	1	--	1
Editorials	6	5	4	5	2	1	--	--
Religion	--	6	5	--	--	33	5	1
Sports	1	1	1	--	--	2	2	1
Music	--	--	--	--	--	1	40	5
Children's	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1
Puzzles	1	--	--	--	--	1	1	5
Schools	--	10	8	--	1	2	1	1
Personal Advice	9	--	--	--	--	1	--	--
Information on Entert.	--	--	--	--	--	6	--	1
Personal Grooming	1	--	--	1	13	--	--	1

Table No. 19
Proportion each Subject is of Total Mentions
(per cent)*

	Daily	Sunday	Weekly	Farm Mags.	Wo. Mag.	Other Mags	Radio	TV
News--General	26	22	3	1	--	12	33	29
Local News	28 } 64	6 } 38	57 } 62	1 } 3	-- } 1	1 } 24	12 } 48	1 } 34
Non-Local News	10	10	2	1	1	11	3	4
Farm Information	3	1	2	30	--	1	4	5
Weather	2	1	1	1	--	--	20	17
Homemaking	12	26	6	54	53	7	2	4
Gardening	--	1	1	3	8	2	--	1
Fiction	--	1	--	2	19	11	1	20
Comics	4	9	1	3	--	2	1	1
Health	2	1	1	1	1	6	1	1
Advertisements	3	7	18	1	1	1	2	1
Travel	--	1	--	1	--	1	--	1
Editorials	3	3	22	3	1	1	--	--
Religion	1	--	3	1	--	27	2	1
Sports	1	2	1	--	--	2	1	1
Music	--	--	--	--	--	1	20	5
Children's	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1
Puzzles, Quiz	1	2	--	1	--	1	1	5
Education	1	1	5	1	1	2	1	1
Personal Advice	1	--	1	--	1	1	--	--
Information on Entert.	5	8	--	--	--	5	--	1
Personal Grooming	1	4	--	1	8	--	--	1

*(percentages rounded; any less than 1% is counted as 1%.)

This table illustrates the interlocking network of the media in providing content for the audience. Following is a brief description of that network. Newspapers and broadcast media appear to provide local and non-local news. All of the media appear to provide some aspects of entertainment. Television seems to lead with radio providing some aspects (music), other magazines and women's magazines some aspects (fiction). All the media provide some material on helpful information, but again the aspects tend to be specialized. Farm magazines lead in farm information. Farm magazines and women's magazines tend to provide information on homemaking with daily and Sunday newspapers playing a role.

Semantic Differential

A semantic scale rating was made of the media (radio programs you listen to; television programs you watch; daily newspapers you read, weekly newspapers you read, farm magazines you read, women's magazines you read, and other magazines you read.)

The first computations on these data yielded mean rankings and standard deviations for each medium on each adjective pair. All means were on the positive side of the five-point scales, ranging from a low of 3.43 (television--strong-weak) to a high of 4.67 (farm magazines--useful-useless). The statistical "t" test was used to determine significance of differences in these high-low means. Data are presented in Table No. 20.

Table No. 20
Semantic Differential Mean Ratings
High and Low ratings of television, radio, daily and weekly newspapers, farm, women's and other magazines.

Adjective Pairs	Highest Rating	Lowest Rating
useful-useless*	Farm Magazines	Television
honest-dishonest*	Farm Magazines	Television
interesting-uninteresting	Women's Magazines	Radio
timely-untimely	Farm Magazines	Weekly Newsp.
informative-uninformative	Daily Newspapers	Television
believable-unbelievable*	Farm Magazines	Television
strong-weak	Farm Magazines	Television
important-unimportant	Daily Newspapers	Television
relaxed-tense	Women's Magazines	Radio
pleasant-unpleasant	Women's Magazines	Daily Newsp.
good-bad	Other Magazines	Television
reliable-unreliable	Farm Magazines	Television
entertaining-unentertaining	Television	Weekly Newsp.

*means for these high-low media differ significantly at the .05 level, "t" test.

The medium with the overall strongest rating is farm magazines, high on 6 of the 13 scales. Also strong are daily newspapers and women's magazines. The weakest ratings (though all were positive) go to television with lowest on 8 of 13 scales, and to radio and weekly newspapers.

The 13 adjective pairs were factor analyzed, resulting in six factors for each medium. Four factors are reported here since they account for at least 95% of the total variance with each medium. Table No. 21 reports all clusters of correlation coefficients above .4000 for each factor produced.

Table No. 21
Meaning of Various Mass Media According to Results of Factor Analysis of Semantic Differential Scales

A. Television Programs You Watch (n=488)

Entertainment Factor (plus Evaluation) -- 39% of variance	
entertaining	.69165
pleasant	.61827
relaxed	.60025
good	.58737
interesting	.51362
Credibility Factor -- 27% of variance	
believable	.54074
strong	.51664
honest	.46477
reliable	.44695
Information Factor -- 17% of variance	
timely	.48945
informative	.45618
Evaluation Factor -- 13% of variance	
important	.46345
useful	.44960

B. Radio Programs You Listen To (n=504)

Entertainment Factor -- 29%	
relaxed	.64850
pleasant	.56938
entertaining	.54897
Credibility Factor -- 26%	
honest	.58750
believable	.47107
reliable	.43590
strong	.25181

Evaluation Factor -- 26%

interesting	.51106
useful	.49229
important	.45837
good	.44944

Information Factor -- 14%

timely	.43464
informative	.37430

C. Daily Newspapers You Read (n=445)

Entertainment Factor (plus Evaluation) -- 31%

pleasant	.68344
relaxed	.66332
entertaining	.59387
good	.51178

Information and Evaluation Factor -- 29%

informative	.63761
useful	.61613
important	.56206
interesting	.54249
timely	.42077

Credibility Factor -- 24%

honest	.66838
believable	.63697
reliable	.48191
strong	.36649

Information Factor -- 11%

timely	.50462

D. Weekly Newspapers You Read (n=376)

Entertainment Factor (plus Evaluation) -- 32%

pleasant	.69352
relaxed	.67740
entertaining	.54033
good	.50986
interesting	.47856

Credibility Factor -- 32%

believable	.72684
honest	.68405
reliable	.57513
strong	.48405

Evaluation Factor -- 21%

useful	.54902
interesting	.54269
important	.52011

Information Factor -- 13%

timely	.46750
informative	.40456

E. Farm Magazines You Read (n=480)

Credibility, Information and Evaluation Factors -- 37%

believable	.71029
reliable	.63362
honest	.62972
strong	.54435
timely	.47364
informative	.42216
good	.42714
important	.40779

Entertainment Factor -- 29%

relaxed	.73027
entertaining	.59061
pleasant	.56924
good	.45816

Evaluation (and Information) Factor -- 24%

interesting	.61092
useful	.60174
informative	.43254

Information Factor -- 7%

timely	.38446
informative	.38711

F. Women's Magazines You Read (n=338)

Credibility Factor and Others -- 34%

strong	.70765	Informative	.43009
reliable	.57943	honest	.41351
important	.57926	good	.39493
believable	.57454	timely	.39682
		useful	.33925

Entertainment Factor (plus Evaluation) -- 32%

pleasant	.67549
entertaining	.62309
good	.54282
relaxed	.51037
interesting	.49263

Mixed Factor --- 21%

useful	.60300
honest	.45627
interesting	.41650
timely	.39301
good	.37199

Information (and Evaluation) Factor -- 10%

informative	.40765
interesting	.40540

G. Other Magazines You Read (n=401)

Entertainment (and Other) Factor -- 34%

relaxed	.70146
pleasant	.68863
entertaining	.64902
good	.56381
interesting	.52322
useful	.41569
informative	.40259

Credibility and Evaluation Factor - 33%

believable	.72914	useful	.43756
reliable	.69980	strong	.40666
important	.55107		
honest	.50840		
good	.50772		

Information (and Other) Factor -- 27%

timely	.64370
strong	.57368
informative	.53244
interesting	.54543
honest	.45244

The data show that some media yielded more easily interpreted factors than others. "Radio you listen to" and "Television you watch" have especially clear factors. At the other extreme, interpretation of factors for "other magazines you read" is difficult because of a multiple redundancy of adjectives among its factors. This is the most ambiguous media category--it includes church magazines, news magazines, and all other general and special-interest magazines except farm and women's.

The resulting factors are termed: Information, Entertainment, Credibility, and Evaluation.

The Entertainment factor contains the adjectives entertaining, relaxed and pleasant for all media, adding the terms good and interesting in some cases.

The Information factor has only two terms--informative and timely. These terms show up on separate factors for three media and together for four media. In print media, these adjectives appear in several factors.

The Credibility factor almost always includes the adjectives believable, honest, reliable, and strong, and sometimes also includes important.

The Evaluative factor usually contains the terms interesting, useful and important, with the adjective good appearing in some cases. This is definitely the least clear factor for most media. Evaluative terms frequently load high on the other factors.

In the aggregate, the entertainment factor accounts for a large share of total variance. The strength of this factor compared to the information factor is somewhat surprising in the case of use-oriented media such as farm magazines and other print media. Evidently the use of media for relaxation and entertainment is a deeper and more pervasive thing than is brought out in the other function questions, especially with newspapers and magazines which contain a high proportion of content on information compared to entertainment.

Media Evaluation - General Evaluation

To obtain general rankings of the media, several questions were asked. One of these, "Which of the print media would you keep if you could keep one?", is summarized in Table No. 22.

Table No. 22
Choice of Print Media
(per cent)

Daily	47
Other Mag	19
Weekly	14
Farm Mag	13
Women's Mag	4
Sunday News	1
Don't Know	2

It is interesting that one medium (daily newspaper) draws nearly half the votes in this ranking. The high ranking of other magazines may be due to attachment to religious magazines, which make up quite a group in this media class. It is not clear if there is a relationship between this question and functional orientation. Later analysis should reveal such a relationship if it exists.

Respondents were also asked for an "all around evaluation" of the media, that is "how well are they doing." Table No. 23 presents these data.

Table No. 23
Evaluation of Media
(per cent)

	Daily	Sunday	Weekly	Farm Mag	Women's Mag	Other Mag	TV	Radio
Very Good	19	11	15	33	20	20	16	19
Good	68	46	48	57	58	49	47	66
So-So	8	18	18	6	9	16	29	13
Poor	1	3	3	1	1	2	4	--
Very Poor	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
Don't Know	3	22	16	3	13	13	3	3

The striking feature of this table is the low percentage of respondents who ranked any of the media in the poor categories. This is similar to answers on the semantic differential. The respondents were either fairly satisfied with the media or were unwilling to rate them in a poor category. Some media have a proportionately large percentage in the "don't know" category. This is partly due to non-exposure. They don't see this medium. Some of the "so-so" rating may also be due to non-exposure rather than a literal feeling that the media are doing a so-so job. Adding the "very good" and "good" categories together gives 87% for dailies; 57% for Sunday newspapers; 63% for weeklies; 90% for farm magazines; 78% for women's magazines; 69% for other magazines; 63% for television; and 85% for radio. There is some reluctance with around 40% of the sample to rate Sunday newspapers, weeklies and television in the good categories. This may be due to non-exposure with Sunday newspapers and weeklies, but probably not with television. Table No. 24 gives the mean ranking of the media, not considering the don't know category.

Table No. 24
Mean Ranking of Media in Evaluation

Farm Magazines	1.75	
Women's Magazines	1.89	
Daily Newspapers	1.90	1 = very good
Radio	1.93	2 = good
Other Magazines	2.01	3 = so-so
Weekly Newspaper	2.10	4 = poor
Sunday Newspaper	2.16	5 = very good
Television	2.23	

An additional question asked (as the interview opener) to get the general orientation toward relaxation and particularly toward the mass media in relaxation. The question read, "When you have time to relax, what do you prefer to do in that time?" Answers (1st and 2nd mentions) are presented in Table No. 25.

Table No. 25
Relaxation Choices

	1st Mentioned	2nd Mention
Read--General	33	22
Read--Newspaper	4	5
Read--Farm Magazines	1	2
Read--Women's Magazines	1	1
Read--Other Magazines	2	3
Read--Books	1	3
Watch TV	25	23
Listen to Radio	1	2
In the House (Misc.)	32	33
Out of the House	2	6

This question was not directed to mass media activities. Respondents did not have any clue before this as to the direction of the schedule. Therefore, it is interesting to note that the media play a major part in the relaxation orientation of these women. It is also interesting to note that some 42 per cent listed reading (in some form) as their first choice, with an additional 265 picking television or radio. It should be pointed out that exposure to radio is not necessarily considered a relaxation activity, but often follows women through their work patterns. In house and out of house activities were not coded in detail. They normally consisted of some sort of hobby or athletic activity.

Prestige Rating:

The respondents were asked a series of questions to determine if various media or types of media content had high or low prestige in their eyes. A later report will associate the prestige ratings with media exposure and functional orientation. Frequency data are presented here.

The respondents were asked first their reaction to media in general, i.e., "Which of these persons would you be inclinded to think more highly of---one who reads newspapers, reads magazines, reads books, watches television, or listens to radio?" (This is not a ranking. They answered for each medium. Also, a no answer does not mean they think less of people who do each activity; rather they just don't think more highly.)

Table No. 26
Prestige Rating of the Media
(per cent)

Do you think more highly of people who--	Yes	No	Don't Know
Read Newspapers?	74	20	6
Read Magazines?	55	34	10
Watch TV?	30	58	12
Listen to Radio?	40	51	9
Read Books?	64	29	7

It's patently obvious that content within a given medium may vary as much or more than between media. For example, the range of quality and type of appeal within television is great. So is it in books. It is also obvious that this question does not reveal what the respondent was reacting to in rating the media.

With these qualifications, it can be pointed out that reading draws a larger proportion of positive prestige rating than do the broadcast media. This may be related to the general question on relaxation where a larger proportion said they would read. Books draw the second highest proportion of positive prestige rating. Behavior in book reading was not made in this study but the 1957 study showed book reading almost non-existent.

To obtain a little more depth on prestige, respondents were asked to praise or criticize content of the broadcast media and magazine class. An example of this battery of questions is: "What particular magazines are there, if any, that lead you to think more highly of people who read them? And, what particular magazines, if any, lead you to think less highly of people who read them?" Magazines and broadcast programs were classified according to type. Similar questions were asked concerning newspapers, but it was not possible to classify them according to type.

Table No. 27 gives responses to these questions for (1) Class of radio programs, (2) Class of television programs, and (3) general class of magazines for those "who think more highly of people who listen/read/view them" and those "who think less highly of people who listen/read/view them." Answers are voluntary, not check off.

Table No. 27
Prestige Rating of Type and Content of Radio
Television and Magazines
(per cent)

	PRESTIGE	NON-PRESTIGE
Class of Radio Programs		
News, Public Affairs	21.4	--
"Good" Music, Classical	5.0	--
Religion	3.5	.2
Education	1.5	--
Women's, Homemaking	1.3	--
Farm	.9	--
Popular (country, Western) Music	.6	4.3
Review, Variety	.6	.4
Quiz and Panel	.4	.6
Soap Box	.2	3.8
Sports	.2	.2
None	63.4	88.7
Class of Television Program		
News, Public Affairs	12.5	.2
"Good"Music, Classical	1.7	.2
Religion	1.1	--
Education	3.9	--
Women's, Homemaking	.6	--
Farm	.7	--
Popular (country, Western) Music	.4	.4
Review, Variety	5.4	1.7
Quiz and Panel	4.3	1.7
Soap Box	2.0	3.1
Sports	.4	.7
Family Situation & Sit. Comedy	4.8	2.8
Children's & Cartoons	1.1	2.8
Westerns	.9	10.2
Crime, Police, War	.4	18.5
General Drama	1.3	.2
None	57.1	57.6
Class of Magazines		
Farm Magazines	8.2	--
Women's	9.2	.4
Love & Romance	.4	33.3
Movie	.2	4.3
Literary	--	--
Scientific	.6	--
Comics	--	1.4
Sports	.2	--
Mystery & Detective	--	3.7
General	24.5	2.5
None	57.9	54.9

The table shows that generally just over 40% were willing to praise or critize either television or radio content or a class of magazines. The exception is in criticism of radio content where only 11% found some fault with radio content.

In the broadcast media praise is somewhat scattered. News and public affairs programs attract the most praise. Violence programs on television attracted some criticism (18% for crime, police and war; 10% for westerns). Other criticism is scattered.

For magazines, the "general magazines" attracted praise from 24% of the sample. This was usually a particular favorite magazine for each respondent. Love and romance magazines attracted criticism from 33% of the sample.

There is no overwhelming criticism of these media, although their is some recognition of likes and dislikes. Those people who criticized or praised usually added comments which indicate that they feel fairly strongly about the beliefs they hold.

Farm Decision Making

The women were asked a battery of questions about husband-wife relationships in making farm decisions. These data will be reported later in relation to media behavior. The frequency breakdowns are reported here.

Table No. 28
Farm Decision Making
(per cent)

	Husband Decides; Seldom Discusses	Husband Decides; Usually Discusses	Husband and Wife Decide Together	Wife Decides; Usually Discusses	Wife Decides; Seldom Discusses	Don't Know
To Buy or Rent More Land	6	26	67	1	--	1
To Borrow Money for the Farm	4	20	75	1	--	1
To Buy Major Farm Equipment	2	40	47	1	--	1
What Make of Machinery to Buy	37	45	16	1	--	1
When to Sell Livestock	39	38	21	1	--	1
How Much Fertilizer to Buy	63	27	8	1	--	1
Whether to Try Out a New Crop Variety	52	36	10	1	1	1

The data show (1) practically never does the woman make the decision by herself. (The sample had a few cases of women running the farm, without a male present but they are not included here.), and (2) women tend to participate in those decisions involving spending large sums of money, but not as much in those decisions that do not involve spending large amounts of money.

The data on husband-wife decisions were also coded as to the total number of decisions among the seven possible each person mentioned under each step in the scale. For example, one of the respondents may have indicated that the husband decides on all seven of the items. Another respondent may have indicated that the husband did not decide (by himself) on any of the seven items. Table No. 29 presents the breakdown of these data. Data are not presented on the side of the scale of women making the decisions by themselves since the frequency on this side was practically non-existant (see Table 28).

Table No. 29
Frequency of Women's Participation in Farm Decisions
(per cent)

No. of Decisions	Husband Decides; Seldom Discusses	Husband Decides; Usually Discusses	Husband-Wife Decide Together
None	19	19	32
One	11	15	10
Two	24	20	16
Three	23	22	14
Four	11	14	18
Five	5	5	6
Six	2	2	2
Seven	5	2	3

The data show that 19% of husbands (in terms of the wife's response) do not make any of the decisions by themselves; while 5% make all seven of the decisions by themselves. About half of the husbands make two or three decisions by themselves. Table No. 28 revealed an apparent difference in the woman's participation due to the type of decision, so the two sets of figures appear logical together. While only 5% of the husband-wife pairs were completely patriarchal on farm decisions, almost one third did not make decisions jointly.

Summary

As stated in the introduction, this study is concerned with some of the reasons why farm women read, view and listen to the mass media they choose.

The study was set up to identify the functions of the mass media and their relative importance in the eyes of this audience. To a lesser extent the study is concerned with identifying which media perform which functions.

This report covers the descriptive statistics of the study. The data on functional orientation of Wisconsin farm women to the media are not fully explored in this volume since it is concerned primarily with the descriptive statistics. However the report does give some answers to the questions posed in the previous two paragraphs and does present some analysis in depth.

We are dealing with 540 respondents selected in a multi-stage, area-probability sample of housing units in rural unincorporated areas through the state. Data are representative of farm women in the state.

Before we can answer the question of functional orientation it is necessary to bring ourselves up-to-date on the reading, viewing and listening patterns of these women with the mass media.

The study shows that the media are highly pervasive in Wisconsin farm homes---98.5% of the homes had at least one radio set (average 2.7); 94% had a television set; 95% took at least one farm magazine (average 3.30); 78% took a daily newspaper; 75% had at least one "other" magazine (ie., other than women's or farm); 61% a weekly newspaper; 48% at least one women's magazine; and 47% a Sunday newspaper. The average home had 5.9 magazines in all categories.

Based on earlier data (1957) it appears that the proportion of farm homes with television sets, general and women's magazines has increased. It also appears that the proportion of farm homes with weekly newspapers has decreased. Magazines and radios are available in farm homes in multiple numbers. Only a very few homes are "out of contact" with mass media.

The farm women in this study spend in the neighborhood of 6 or 7 hours per day in some form of contact with the mass media. For the total sample the average per day contact was 2.5 hours for radio; 2.6 hours for television and 28 minutes for daily newspapers. Some of the sample did not participate with given media "yesterday." Eliminating the people who are not subscribers and those who for some reason did not participate yesterday gives a more revealing set of figures. Of those who actually did participate "yesterday" the averages are 3.2 hours for television, 3.1 hours for radio, and 41 minutes for daily newspapers.

In addition the respondents averaged 33 minutes a week on weekly newspapers and 35 minutes on Sunday newspapers. Eliminating the non-participants, the averages are 55 minutes for weeklies and 1.2 hours for Sunday newspapers.

The sample average 2.7 hours per month on farm magazines, 1.6 hours on women's magazines, and 3.2 hours on other magazines. Eliminating non-participants these averages are 3.0 hours for farm magazines, 3.3 hours for women's magazines, and 4.4 hours for other magazines. These data on time exposure are quite close to data gathered with a similar sample in 1957. Radio continues to be primarily a daytime medium and television predominantly an evening medium in Wisconsin rural homes.

There are some individuals who are heavy users of the media, others who are light users. For example, 10% of daily newspaper subscribers, 17% of radio set owners and 14% of TV set owners did not participate yesterday. Some 68% of daily newspaper subscribers spent less than one hour per day on dailies, while 24% of television set owners and 32% of radio set owners spent less than an hour per day on those media.

At the other end of the scale 15% of TV owners watched five hours or more per day and 26% of radio set owners listened five hours or more. When respondents were asked to compare their exposure yesterday to their usual behavior, they tended to cut down on TV time, but to add to radio and reading time.

The study proposal hypothesizes that functions of the mass media can be divided into five major categories:

1) Information

2) Entertainment and relaxation

3) Social prestige

4) Companionship

5) Social contact

Information can be further divided into two sub-categories:

a) Enlightenment on current affairs and the cultural heritage

b) Information that leads to improved individual standards of living or income and business gain

The functional orientation of Wisconsin farm women to the media was measured in four basic types of questions. First, respondents were asked directly (in open-end questions) what they got out of a particular medium. These questions were coded according to general function and according to specific content. Second, respondents were shown situational drawings of women participating in four media situations. These are projection type questions. Answers were coded with the same system as above, ie., function and content. Third, function was sought in a semantic differential scale directed toward the media the respondents used. Finally, a series of content directed questions were asked.

In the direct open-end questions more respondents mentioned information as a function of the media than any other category, followed by entertainment, social contact and companionship. The prestige category did not appear.

Among the media, farm and women's magazines were specified by the largest proportion as information media, while television and weekly newspapers were specified by the lowest proportion. Television was specified by the highest proportion for entertainment and farm magazines and weekly newspapers by the lowest.

Newspapers (primarily weeklies and to a less extent dailies) drew most of the mention of social contact. Radio drew the largest proportion (but only 11% of the sample) on the companionship function.

In the projection questions entertainment was mentioned by more respondents than was information, although both were relatively strong. Companionship showed up more strongly as a function than in the direct question.

Among the media, the positions appear nearly the same, although magazines (no specification as to type) and radio emerge more as entertainment media, and magazines also emerge as a companionship medium. There is still no recognition of the prestige function.

The semantic differential yielded its own set of factors. These can be classified as information, entertainment, credibility and evaluation. Credibility is not explored in this study. Evaluation is, but is not considered a function, rather an independent variable that might impinge on function.

In the aggregate for the semantic differential, the entertainment factor accounted for a large share of total variance in a factor analysis. The strength of this factor compared to the information factor is somewhat surprising even in the case of use-oriented media such as farm magazines and other print media. Entertainment accounts for the largest share of variance among all the media except for farm magazines. Here information (in combination with others) ranks higher.

The open-end content questions tend to support the functional patterns as they emerge in the discussion above, but they give more depth to the picture. Here it is possible to analyze the information category according to the hypothesized dichotomy. Respondents expressed a desire for news and for a number of specific helpful information categories. It is also possible to see interest in various types of entertainment. A pattern of media orientation can be seen. For example weekly newspapers stand out strongly on local news (seen as social contact in earlier function questions). Various kinds of newspapers and the broadcast media obviously play a part in the different levels of news sources. Radio stands out as a provider of music for many. Respondents reveal an interest in religion in "other magazines."

In the content directed questions it is possible for the first time to detect the prestige function. Respondents were asked their 1st and 2nd choices of media "to talk about with others." But this is a forced answer. Daily newspapers and television draw the highest proportion of responses on prestige.

Each of the four types of measuring devices used has its advantages and peculiarities in delineating functions of the media. It is obvious that the respective structures of these measuring devices guide responses. For example, the indirect kinds of questions seemed to permit more expression on entertainment. Still, most aspects of function are consistent over the four measures.

The study shows that these farm women do rely heavily on the media to perform certain purposes or functions. It also appears that the category system originally hypothesized is operational, with the possible exception of the prestige category.

These women appear to use the media in an interlocking fashion in fulfilling the functions. No one medium serves a particular function exclusively. The media are probably not even consciously competitive in the eyes of the audience in providing these functions. There is, therefore, no attempt in this study and no possibility to stereotype the media in terms of function.

In evaluation of the media, the respondents seem to have a general reluctance to criticize. In a scale question with possible answers ranging from very good to very poor, by far the bulk of the responses are on the positive side. In a mean ranking on this question farm magazines score highest and television lowest, but all are on the positive side of the scale. Daily newspapers, on the other hand, were cited as the medium the women would like to keep if they could keep only one. Newspapers show up strongly again in prestige directed questions. (Do you think more highly of people who read newspapers?)

There is some criticism in a series of directed questions toward various programs on television and pulp magazines, but over half the sample had no negative criticism of media content or media type. News oriented content drew the most praise in these directed questions.

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